

Diagrammatic Attention

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Through a transcendental empiricism of racial capitalist perception, diagrammatic attention becomes what brown (2017) has called movement attention for intersectional emancipation and what Deleuze has called 'a microphysics of power and political investment of the body' (1988). What is the method of diagramming movement attention, diagramming attention in and for emancipatory movement? Each convolute in this essay is a node in an emergent diagram of different ecologies of attention, different attention values, and more specifically in the case of this essay attention to the political and philosophical problems of (im)mediation. Each convolute follows an immanent and resonant 'emergent strategy' to decolonise attention in the Hegelian movement of (im)mediation. The main concerns throughout are the post-Hegelian problem of mediation, violence, representation, and its relation to contemporary emancipatory politics, experimental modes of writing (about) affect (e.g. diagrammatic attention), the problem of revolutionary becoming, the relationship of the diagram to representation..

KEYWORDS

Diagram, affect, attention, slavery, value-form, movement, mediation, post/de-colonial, Hegel, revolutionary becoming

In mathematics as in biology, a structure is a closed group of possible operations.

Raymond Ruyer, The Genesis of Living Forms

1 | INTRODUCTION

How to do things with attention? This question can be interpreted in at least two ways: if attention is an instrument of a supposedly higher rationality it can be used in a variety of ways as any other technology of perception; or, if attention is thought to be a specific form of what neo-orientalists call 'mindfulness', all that one does can be attended to mindfully. The question opens on to other problematics: What is the structure of attending to attention, and what is the racial capitalist history of this management of attention? What is the closure of operations immanent to this structure under erasure, and how does attention to attention 'stretch' (Latin *attendere*, to stretch) both 'body and soul' beyond any arbitrary closure toward another ontogenesis of perception (Ingold, 2005)? If the 'objective illusion' of so-called rational thought is the instrumentalist and practical tendency to privilege product over process (Deleuze, 1994; Adorno and Horkheimer, 2002), if the fetishisms of racial capital present the value-forms of attention (attention-value) in and through "an immense accumulation of commodities" (Marx, 1990), which forms of embodied attention can activate attentional capacities for emancipatory movement and revolutionary action? Can attention become a practice and concept useless for fascism !!No Citation!! (Benjamin, 1936, 1938)? One of the wagers in the convolutes below is that there are potentialities for revolutionary becomings both virtual and real in attentional practices and in their strategic diagrams. In and between the immanent processes of perceptual ontogenesis, the becoming resonant of embodied minds in material and spiritual entanglements within and against racial capital's technological and perceptual assemblages happens in the meantime. The prefigurative diagram of these assemblages and their patterned but unpredictable evolution harken backward and gesture forward to (non)dialectical critiques of the racial capitalist infrastructural surround (Harney and Moten, 2013), and in experiments in collective, material, and spiritual compositions of attention value for emancipation (brown, 2021). The proposition, then, is that the diagrammatic organises attention otherwise for an untimely emancipation-in-movement always to come, blurred, emergent, and opaque. In abstract diagrams of untimely becomings—for instance traversing the experimentations of Edouard Glissant, Franz Kafka, Gilles Deleuze, Ritwik Ghatak, William Burroughs, Rivera Cusicanqui, Achilles Mbembe, Carô Gervay, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Anand Teltumbde, Saidiya Hartmann, Jean-Luc Godard, Tim Ingold, Gloria Anzaldúa, Fred Moten, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Amílcar Cabral, adrienne maree brown, Angela Y. Davis, Barak adé Soleil, C. L. R. James, Guru Dutt, Denise Ferreira da Silva, Ali Lara, Hypatia Vourloumis, Arundhati Roy, or the Black and Dalit panthers—what is at stake in my view is an attention to the revolutionary overthrow of heteronormative, racial and caste capital and all its heterogeneous and historical forms of attention value. As we shall see, the command and control of attention serves the fetish of the value form in racial capital: its majoritarian, savarna (upper caste) reason and distributions of good/common sense (Deleuze, 1994): attention is a form of self-mediation which is itself immediate, attention is ...

...disrupted.

This essay was written in a time of the Zionist genocidal bombing against the Palestinian people of Gaza, settler colonial pogroms in East Jerusalem, of the ramping up of the racist and neoliberal war against Zapatistas and indigenous peoples in Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, of the ongoing propping up of conflict-economies in Ukraine, Sudan, Yemen, Haiti and their supply chains, of the intensification of Islamophobia and no less sinister rise of anti-Semitism, and the weaponization of anti-semitism and the Shoah in the Global North, of an renewed attention to settler colonialism in Palestine, Kashmir, Vancouver, Boston . . . Of ongoing caste atrocity cultures in 'late' Hindutva fascist India (Toscano, 2023). Attention disrupted . . . attention value arises from the fractal cuts of racial capital's infinite distractions !!!No Pettman 2016, only PentlandPower2016!!!(Pettman, 2016; Mishra, LRB 2024, <https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v46/n06/pankaj-mishra/the-shoah-after-gaza>).

Valorization bleeds the cut of attention; the thrill of the gimmick is a mystification of the violence of this

cut (Ngai, 2020). In different parts of the global south and global north, where malls or airports look like any arcade-whatsoever which feels like every platform everywhere, where Bangaluru's cafes and London's pubs begin to share not only a clientele but a certain logic of producing and networking branded flows of attention—in these global ecologies of racial, savarna capitalist (im)mediations of attention, attention is at once immediate and mediate but in a way that diagrams a historically and culturally specific composition of perception, matter, and value-in-motion. Here, the fetish is the Subject and different modes of subjectively variable algorithms through which a repressive and productive regime of counter-insurgent attention enacts, forecloses, denies, the violence of intensive shifts in the (im)mediation of the distraction. This means more than remembering Gaza while swiping left or right. As Paula Serafini emphasizes: "The intensive and extensive extraction of natural resources for profit can generate different forms of violence, from the violation of land rights to impacting people's health, the destruction of ecosystems and even the murder of environmental activists" (2021: 100).

To what end, then, this or that interruption of attention in a time of generalised civil war, fascist mobilization, and pervasive eco- and genocides? This or that distraction from the ongoing genocides?

How does attention relate (im)mediately to the value form of racial capital? Does it reconnect affect to what it can do, and thereby decommodifying attention as exchange value?

Is any of this possible without a revolution?

[attention]...is a form of continuous, affective, 'cognitive' labour correlated with the desiring flows and accumulation of surplus value and the efficiency demands of white logistics, the value form of the commodity 'changed in imagination into so many different quantities' of the money equivalent is today in the late fascisms of racial capital also a mode of attention !!!No Marx1999!!!(Marx, 1993; Toscano 2023).

Deleuze writes that there are "four principal aspects to 'reason' in so far as it is the medium of representation: identity, in the form of the undetermined concept; analogy, in the relation between ultimate determinable concepts; opposition, in the relation between determinations within concepts; resemblance, in the determined object of the concept itself. These forms are like the four heads or the four shackles of mediation. Difference is 'mediated' to the extent that it is subjected to the fourfold root of identity, opposition, analogy and resemblance" (Deleuze, 1994: 29-30; see also Sauvagnargues, 2013). And again, from the brilliant conclusion to *Difference and Repetition* difference in itself is tamed only when subject to the four iron collars of representation: identity in the concept, opposition in the predicate, analogy in judgement and resemblance in perception (1994: 262). As Anne Sauvagnargues argues, The Hegelian dialectic, in spite of being framed by its founder as a struggle against the traditional idea of representation, thus becomes the foil of choice for Deleuze. According to Deleuze, transductive disparation and the eternal recurrence of difference combine to effectively overturn the dominance of negativity and representation, which until then reigned supreme as a misguided construal of difference "subordinated to identity, reduced to the negative, incarcerated within similitude and analogy." (2013: 43; Deleuze, 1994: 50) Mediation, determination, contradiction, negation are all tied irreducibly to the problem of representation, and the problem is poorly posed in Hegel. It is also, as we shall see with Hegel's treatment of 'pure being' in the *Logic*, (im)mediated. Mediation concerns the violence of the dialectic, as Silva's analysis will help us to draw out; and mediation as a concept of political engagement and social change is also about the possibility of emancipatory and prefigurative politics beyond the gatekeepers, indeed of emancipation itself. I propose the concept and category of mediation become a central problematic in practices that affirm an ongoing, infinite and fractal revolutionary becoming of attention. The concept of mediation as it becomes a focus of attention from disparate frameworks and political orientations, will have emerged as paradoxical, contradictory, (d)elusive: it is part of some poorly posed problems in critical theory, and these problems also in some distinct and obscure ways involve attention, technology, movement, sensation, monstrosity, ontogenesis, and co-evolution (to name a few metastable dynamics) (Deleuze, 1994: 259). Diagrammatic attention as an awry method of emancipation

and revolutionary becoming comes on to the scene of identity, opposition, analogy, and resemblance to put all these concepts, and the concept of (im)mediation itself under erasure. A diagrammatic attention to (im)mediation would operate in a queer temporality of the meantime, or a movement from the middle where the grass grows, and in which attention is itself in play, in radical open relationality, and absolute survey not reducible to the possibilistic, spatialised, quantified, and perceiving 'body' (Ingold, 2021: 197-98; Freeman, 2010; Simondon, 2017; Ruyer, 2016).

But here absolute survey does not entail any 'science' of the experience of consciousness as with the march of the white universal absolute spirit (Hegel, 1977, 2015; Heidegger, 1988). While consciousness and body become in-distinct in certain Hindu mystical practices of meditation that are arrogantly rebuked and dialectically assimilated in the customary racist way by Hegel in the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (1991) and the *Logic* (2015), this posited and practically achieved unity of consciousness and material embodiment in Raj yogic practice, which was predicated on the social reproduction of the material body of the (usually masculine, upper caste, and the more or less privileged) yogi and was accomplished through the violent and misogynist metabolisms of that yogi's ecologies—this unity today (mindfulness as the control of attention) has been turned into the latest Brahmanical/Savarna/White Supremacist/Fascist lie told to an increasingly niche market-differentiated populace habituated to Tiktok/Godii media ecologies of sensation (Trump's "Chinese tech"; Modi's murderous smile über alles in India). But what is happening behind the backs of the attendees of platform capitalism, what is the 'hidden abode of production' for these consumers of attention value (Marx, 1990; Adorno, 2006)?

Diagrammatic attention turns to this hidden abode of the production of attention value through commodity exchange with a non-representational materialist, non-organic vitalism (Cheah, 2013; Wen et al., 2023). Diagrammatology proceeds through interfused, entangled common notions, that is notions that are common to two or more multiplicities understood through their affective processes of composition and decomposition (on 'interfusion' see Hegel, 1977: 242; on 'entanglement' Barad, 2007; on the relation of interstitial differentiation in processes of correspondence to Barad's notion of intra-action Ingold, 2021: 6; on the common notions Deleuze, 1988; on being reconnected to what a body can do Deleuze, 2006). The abstractions of socially necessary labor time from precarious, (un)waged, and unbowed labor. More, the exploitation, control, and abstraction of socially necessary labour time and the forms of attention susceptible to this control (e.g. mindfulness as labour discipline and relative surplus value extraction, the attending mind-for-productivity as value-form in racial capital, the financialisation of attending to algorithmic increments of difference, the different flows of these assetized increments financialising, in turn, different rates of attention entropy)—the diagrammatology of attention is not attention in general or universal perception, which are merely different white mythologies: there is no such thing as attention in general (Derrida, 1983). Is it then merely a weak heuristic or experimental and value-less method? What is the value of a revolutionary becoming in and of diagrammatic attention and in which way will it have been useless for savarna, Zionist, white, settler fascism (Pitts, 2017; Farsakh, 2005, 2021; Benjamin, 2008; Bhattacharyya, 2017; Genosko, 2012; Alliez, 2013; Collett, 2020; Varghese and Manoj NY, 2021; Heinrich, 2012; Lotz, 2014; Arthur, 2003, 2004, 2013)?

Diagrammatic attention proceeds through an itinerary that follows relations external to their terms, moving through Raymond Ruyer's distinction between primary consciousness (form, domain, survey) and appearance (in perception). We will return to Ruyer toward the last of these convolutes, but we must begin by asking what can diagrammatic mode of attention do—how does it contribute to a practical philosophy? As Alliez remarks, "What we are dealing with is a diagram functioning 'as a modulator' of synthesis, triply freeing planes from the perspective they replace, colour from the painterliness beyond which it is deployed, and the body from the organism it overflows" (2013: 218). Diagrammatic attention is always implicated in a certain political force, it is what happens when the body is reactivated through connecting again to what it can potentially and actually do; this is also when diagrammatic attention attains to the ontogenesis of the common notions, that is notions that relate two or more multiplicities through

affective and intensive processes of composition and decomposition (Cheah, 2013: 104). This is when attention to potentializing affective capacity becomes the transcendental precondition for emancipatory, revolutionary, radical action in and for itself, open to its outside and militant in its insistence on collective, intersectional, total emancipation. What forms of experimental writing with which modes of diagrammatic attention have broken with the law of clear and distinct correspondence and commensurations of the dominant value form (i.e. money) of racial capital? How do we recompose perceptual and material lines of flight without commensuration, without the judgement of the gods, or the full adequation to a pre-given, abstract measure of value (its monetary validation through market exchange) or unity (of identity or experience), and affirming the revolutionary becoming of attention in the absence of actually existing revolutionary conjunctures? This is what adrienne maree brown helps us to understand as a process of 'holding change' (brown, 2021).

What is value in an attention economy that is itself instrumentalised in the drive to privatise commons, exploit monopoly rents through intellectual property, extract indigenous resources, and assetize 'authentic identities' and everyday use values (Birch and Muniesa, 2020; Birch and Ward, 2024; Harvey, 2006; Saintilan and Schreiber, 2023: 110-11)? The ongoing enclosures of the cultural and material commons, what Marx called 'primitive' or originary accumulation, and the reproduction of white supremacist / savarna heteropatriarchy through the value form and processes of domination also expands racial capitalist production through creative innovations in infrastructures, financialisation (derivatives, NFTs, social impact bonds, assets), logistics, and containerisation. No doubt these are not all the same processes yet they are integrated in the real abstractions and material assemblages of attention ecologies in racial capital (Marx, 1990; Singh, 2016; Toscano, 2008, 2023; O'Kane, 2020; Sohn-Rethel, 2020; Harney and Moten, 2013, 2021; Robinson, 2020; Varghese and Manoj NY, 2021; Vaswani et al., 2017). This diagram relates the political history of the Black Atlantic to the Black Mediterranean today to ongoing settler colonialism in Kashmir and Palestine by close allies India and Israel (Grindon, 2023). Does the expansion of capitalist production and extraction of surplus value in and through the attention economy in racial capital break with the so-called 'labour theory of value' and, as site of relative surplus value extraction and accumulation, does consumerist and productivist attention mitigate the tendency of the 'falling rate of profit' and (for AI coders in racial capital) the phenomenon of attention entropy collapse in machine learning (cf. Bueno, !cite said 2017 but only 2016 available! 2016; Clarke, 2016; Zhai et al., 2023)?

Diagrammatic attention, when composed with and through social movements and decolonial politics of emancipatory becoming, mobilizes therefore a non-representational, non-organic, and pragmatic semiotics which nonetheless can also become a brandable ecology of sensory motor circuits; diagrammatic attention is immense and immeasurable but susceptible to control, to borrow from Antonio Negri. In this territorialization of perception, marketing becomes the abstract diagram of attention: habitually encircled, peristaltically triggered mirror neurons 'immediately' perceiving and machined to capture the transindividual, transpatial intuition of a virtual, embodied, abstract, actual subject in (im)mediated absolute survey (Ingold, !cite said 2022 but only 2021 available! 2021: 238-39). A higher empiricism of an originary technicity (Stiegler, Lazzarato, Derrida, Simondon, Guattari, Hansen, Clough, Bueno) may join a post-phenomenology of perception, memory, duration, technicity, matter, and spirit for a revolutionary becoming of attention without necessarily overturning, sometimes even ramifying the value form of attention in racial capital. There's a history to this revolutionary becoming of attention and it relates settler colony to metropole, subaltern to elite, straight to queer, and exploited to exploiter through the social relations of the value form of racial capitalism. From the work of Walter Benjamin, T. W. Adorno, Jonathan Crary, Susan Buck-Morss and many others, pastiches of high imperial modernism that reworked the attentional capacities of successive and nonlinear generations of radio listeners, movie goers, and TV viewers are the affordances being 'revolutionised' on Tiktok today (Crary, 1992, 2001, 2013).

2 | REVOLUTIONARY BECOMING IS NOT A NAÏVE VITALISM; OR, WHAT IS AN IMMEDIATE MEDIATION?

In a diagrammatology without reserve, attention is historically situated within and against racial capital and capitalist racism. Something happened to attention from the era of the industrial commodity to the financial derivative (Haiven, 2014, 2023; Martin, 2009, 2013; Benjamin, 2008). For such a method of (im)mediate negative dialectics, the question of vitalism is poorly posed, becomes an (im)mediated and transparent interior, hollow, pure nothingness, pure emptiness, a monstrous nullity, the relation of all relations is in the movements celebrated by what Hegel excoriated as a naïve subjectivism, the immediacy celebrated in vitalism. But nullity is not in opposition to vitalism, nullity can be a form of the racial capitalist capture of the vital, as in the pre-prepared image cultures of bourgeois romanticism reviled by Adorno. The new context into which these pre-prepared images enter as so many letters is always that of the command. The viewer is required constantly to translate the images back into writing. The exercise of obedience inheres in the fact of translation itself as soon as it takes place automatically. The more the film-goer, the hit song enthusiast, the reader of detective and magazine stories anticipates the outcome, the solution, the structure and so on, the more his attention is displaced towards the question of how the nugatory result is achieved, to the rebus-like details involved, and in this searching process of displacement the hieroglyphic meaning suddenly reveals itself. It articulates every phenomenon right down to the subtlest nuance according to a simplistic two-term logic of 'dos' and 'don'ts', and by virtue of this reduction of everything alien and unintelligible it overtakes the consumers. (Adorno, 2020: 94) In the nullity of European bourgeois morality the work of ideological mediation fetishizing the value form continues apace for Adorno; this ideology is at least partially the work of the displacement of attention, toward fetishized packets of representational sensation (attention value) through which racial capitalist money capital circulates and accumulates. This is also a form of (im)mediation: the becoming mediated of immediacy and the becoming immediate of the mediated (Hegel, 2015: 68). We speak here of different and overlapping configurations of the white supremacist military-entertainment-prison complex, an (im)mediation of the molecular, the persistent re-, de-territorialisations of racial capitalist sensoria, the becoming digital binge of normative televisual watching, the representational capture of the body's non-linear co-evolution with formal and jugaad media (Rai, 2019). What forms of attention can compose collective revolutionary refusals of both the heteronormative and monopoly capitalist technicity of media ecologies and the abstract attentional diagrams (post-representational cognitive maps) they habituate? Mediation can be understood methodologically as a certain embodied movement of displacement in dialectical cognitive mapping !!!Neither Citation exists!!!(Jameson, Beller, 2006). In developing a pragmatic and non-representational sense of dialectical diagrammatic attention, something needs to happen to this method, even as we move with Deleuze's insight that the dialectic (hence mediation, hence determination) is the beginning of thought (1994). The method of non-linear and non-representational parataxis (Adorno, 2005), or a diagrammatic attention for the intensification of untimely revolutionary becomings, draws up a network of associations in forming a set of propositions for the argument(s) to follow; each parataxical convolute ventures a fractal and speculative diagram of the possible prise de positions in a specific domain of action, class, racial, caste struggle, and which dramatize all the tragic and farcical position takings in a science fictionally potentializing, and virtual-actual, interzonal borderland contact zone—entangling the de-territorialisations of Bourdieu (1993), Davis (2016), Postone (1993), ML Pratt (2007), Fanon (2021), Anzuldúa (2022), and Deleuze (1994) in a once and future emancipation, that will always be untimely—immense and immeasurable but susceptible to rentierization and financialization. As I write, today, here and without metaphor what is happening to attention through the media reterritorialization of the genocide in Gaza for the Zionist state and the occupation of Kashmir for Hindutva India is matter of life or death amidst the administration of ongoing actual and social death for Black people, Muslims, Dalits, queer folk, feminists, and indigenous peoples in India and Palestine (Wilderson, 2010; Puar, 2017;

Farsakh, 2021; Kanjwal, 2023; Davis, 2016).

Thus: dominant racial-caste capitalist cultures (im)mediate intersectionally positioned and stratified workers's relationship to their own imaginative capacities through the habituated spacetimes of anticipatory (risk averse, measured, assetisable), fragmented (precarious), and fractal attentions. Attention ecologies are targets and instruments totalise by maximizing the heterogeneity of complex ecologies through command (be creative!), duty (be productive!), judgement (you lack!), and debt (be guilty for what you owe!). The alien and the unintelligible are dominated once again, the time of liberation is subsumed by the time of domination, as the controlled imaginations of 'creatives' are put to work for racial, patriarchal, platform capital (attention value accumulation on the plane of affect) (Negri 2003, Bueno ?; Toscano, 2023; Alexander, 2018; Anderson, 2021; Pract AC, ?, ?; Pitts, 2017; Clough, 2018; Cubitt, 2016). Attention is a mode of displacement for Adorno—which militant diagrams experiment with the movement of this displacement? Contemporary media (Adorno was talking mostly about radio and, to a lesser extent, TV) produce the obedience of subjects through the infantilizing habituation of anticipatory attention. Differently, Tiktok and the radio show involve desiring production, both translating a nugatory result into the idioms of everyday life. To understand this (non)dialectical movement of (im)mediation in its complexity, we return again to the problem of mediation and in another timespace of our diagram through an encounter with Denise Ferreira da Silva's critique of transparency in Hegel.

Let us begin by considering then the role of (im)mediation, the problem of the (im)mediate, and (non)dialectical becoming in the experience of embodied consciousness that Hegel elaborates (repetitively, circularly) in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (!no hegel1807!1977), in which, for Deleuze, the "Hegelian contradiction appears to push difference to the limit, but this path is a dead end which brings it back to identity, making identity the sufficient condition for difference to exist and be thought. It is only in relation to the identical, as a function of the identical, that contradiction is the greatest difference. The intoxications and giddinesses are feigned, the obscure is already clarified from the outset. Nothing shows this more clearly than the insipid monocentricity of the circles in the Hegelian dialectic" (1994: 263; Glissant, 1997; Heidegger, 1988; Hegel, 2015; Cubitt, 2016; for illuminating problematizations of the relations between Deleuzian ontology and Hegelian dialectic see Houle and Vernon eds., 2013). In the section, 'C.A.A. Reason. Observing Reason', Hegel marks the completion of the transcendental outcome of a preceding immanent movement of self-consciousness (for Hamlet, the skull is not the Being of Spirit, the being of Spirit is not in the skull's bone) (208). Note here the decisive and indeterminate role of the process of the (Kantian) 'category':

The Unhappy Self-consciousness renounced its independence, and struggled to make its being-for-self into a Thing. It thereby reverted from self-consciousness to consciousness, i.e. to the consciousness for which the object is something which merely is, a Thing; but here, what is a Thing is self-consciousness; the Thing is, therefore, the unity of the 'I' and being—the category. The object being determined thus for consciousness, the latter possesses Reason. Consciousness, as well as self-consciousness, is in itself Reason; but only that consciousness for which the object is determined as the category can be said to have Reason. From this, however, we must still distinguish the knowledge of what Reason is. The category, which is the immediate unity of being and self, must pass through both forms, and it is precisely for consciousness qua observer that the category presents itself in the form of being. This consciousness, in its result, enunciates as a proposition that of which it is the unconscious certainty—the proposition that is implicit in the Notion of Reason. This proposition is the infinite judgement that the self is a Thing, a judgement that suspends itself. Through this result, then, the category is further determined as being this self-superseding antithesis. The pure category, which is present for consciousness in the form of being or immediacy, is the object as still unmediated, as merely given, and consciousness is equally unmediated in its relation to it. The moment of that infinite judgement is the transition of immediacy into mediation, or negativity. The given object is consequently determined as a negative object; consciousness, however, is determined as self-consciousness over against it; in

other words, the category which, in the course of observation, has run through the form of being is now posited in the form of being-for-self; consciousness no longer aims to find itself immediately, but to produce itself by its own activity. It is itself the End at which its action aims, whereas in its role of observer it was concerned only with things. (Hegel, 1977: 208-09) From passive Observe to active End in itself: the dialectical image of thought (Deleuze, 1994) obscures the dialectic's own violent movement of assimilating or eliminating the O/other—the living other lives on as representational reminiscence in dead memory, in being overcome in the representational churn of dialectical movement. In normalising interpretations of Hegel's master-slave dialectic this violence is dissimulated.

Hegel's Spirit is in some sense the supposed "movement" of mediation itself as a narrative or representation of self-overcoming. But then is not self-mediation in itself immediate? Consider this movement in the discussion of pure knowledge and philosophy's beginning with 'pure being' in the *Logic* (1817): Now starting with this determination of pure knowledge, all that we have to do to ensure that the beginning will remain immanent to the science of this knowledge is to consider, or rather, setting aside every reflection, simply to take up, what is there before us. Pure knowledge, thus withdrawn into this unity, has sublated every reference to an other and to mediation; it is without distinctions and as thus distinctionless it ceases to be knowledge; what we have before us is only simple immediacy. Simple immediacy is itself an expression of reflection; it refers to the distinction from what is mediated. The true expression of this simple immediacy is therefore pure being. Just as pure knowledge should mean nothing but knowledge as such, so also pure being should mean nothing but being in general; being, and nothing else, without further determination and filling... So we have just given, right within science itself, the reason why in pure science the beginning is made with pure being. This pure being is the unity into which pure knowledge returns, or if this knowledge, as form, is itself still to be kept distinct from its unity, then pure being is also its content. It is in this respect that this pure being, this absolute immediate, is just as absolutely mediated. However, just because it is here as the beginning, it is just as essential that it should be taken in the one-sidedness of being purely immediate. If it were not this pure indeterminacy, if it were determined, it would be taken as something mediated, would already be carried further than itself: a determinate something has the character of an other with respect to a first. It thus lies in the nature of a beginning itself that it should be being and nothing else. There is no need, therefore, of other preparations to enter philosophy, no need of further reflections or access points. (Hegel, 1977: 50) What happens to the categories of knowledge in the "setting aside every reflection, simply to take up, what is there before us"? Pure knowledge, pure being is the unity: Pure knowledge, thus withdrawn into this unity, has sublated every reference to an other and to mediation. Notice the sleight of hand here: distinctionless it ceases to be knowledge; what we have before us is only simple immediacy, without difference or number. Simple immediacy is itself an expression of reflection; it refers to the distinction from what is mediated. pure knowledge returns absolutely immediate, is just as absolutely mediated .

..

We will return to Hegel, but let us first note the contemporaneity of this question of mediation, for instance in the marketized art world or the biopolitical and financialised, that is risk secured, creative industries.

Max Haiven (2018, 2014) helps situate this problem of (im)mediation in relation to Marxist cultural critiques of financialisation, which do not seek a break from the representational collar of mediation. Haiven questions the commodification and financialisation of art, enabling us to understand in what sense art has become a mediation of money in racial capitalism (Haiven, 2018: 53, 185-86; Rancière, 2010, 2011). Haiven draws on Marxist cultural criticism and the Black radical tradition in his arguments against art under financialisation, precaritisation, and neoliberalism; his persistent focus on questions of revolutionary politics in the art economy, the problem of resistance on the culturalist left, the quantitative and qualitative expansion of the common(s) are central to his analysis. Randy Martin's work on the relation of cultural formation to the derivative is decisive for Haiven. For Randy Martin ... financialization appears as a capitalist response to the radical demands for the decolonization of the lifeworld that animated the so-called New

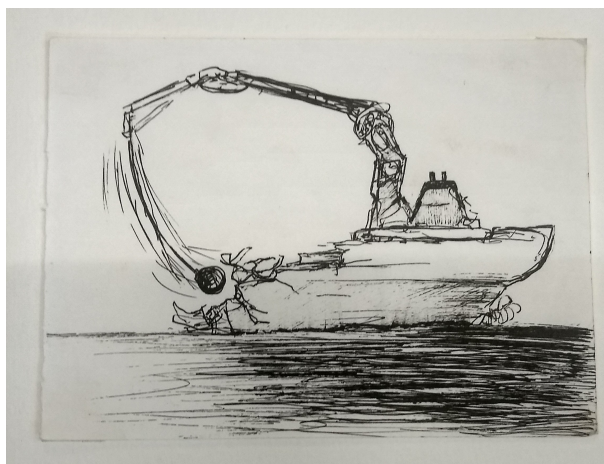


FIGURE 1 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, "The future of shipping, study for 'in[fra]structural' scroll." Gel pen on paper, 2019. Courtesy of the artist.

Social Movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Financialization, in addition to organizing and accelerating the exploitation and integration of capitalist production on a global scale also reaches intensively into daily life, into social relationships and into the realms of subjectivity. As such, its vanguard is not only the production of ever-more sophisticated algorithms and technologies as explored above, it is also the development of methods for speculating upon, harnessing, recalibrating and recoding social life itself. (Social impact investing is a prime example of this tendency). (Martin, 2015; Haiven, 2018: 121) For Haiven and the late Randy Martin, financialization is closely linked to the logic of the fin-tech known as the derivative (Wang, 2020). As Hartman and Kear (2020) contextualize, derivatives enable a plurality of incommensurable types of risk to be reduced to a singularity; derivatives are the real abstractions of risk (Toscano, 2008; O'Kane, 2020; Sohn-Rethel, 2020). The story they tell about the derivative is about the commodification of risk, wherein qualitatively distinct risks are abstracted and detached from the social contexts in which they were created, so that they can be quantified, rendered equivalent, and tradable. As a tool of commensuration, "the derivative is perhaps the highest example of finance's capacity to act as Simmel's "frightful leveler." Writing in a similar vein about the capacity of derivatives to reduce quality to quantity, Bryan and Rafferty note that "with derivatives, one trades in the performance (shift in the quantum) of an attribute of a thing, but without necessarily trading in the 'thing' itself" (331). The derivative enabled financialization and hence the value form and hence racial capitalist production and social reproduction for the past 20 years or so. But for the derivative to advance it had to be an answer to the challenges of decolonization, argues Haiven (with Martin). And for these thinkers the derivative has reordered social and economic life in the process. "In contrast to the post-war Bretton Woods order, where large institutions (governments, corporations, state agencies, etc) managed the lives of aggregated populations, today those populations are disaggregated and the individuals therein cross-cut by affinities, attributes and tendencies only some of which they are aware" (Haiven, 2018: 192). This lack of aware is part of the fetish and the abstraction immanent to racial capital. In the order of financialization, social and neurological capacities and qualities are folded into the system through "data-mining, consuming practices, digital profiling, risk metrics and more, inscrutable algorithms and protocols aggregate us into communities of shared risk without our consent and often without our knowledge" (Haiven, 2018: 192). The processes of financialisation remain opaque; we know for instance through the work of Silva, Bhandar, Haiven, Wiggins, and Vishmidt that people of colour and Black subprime borrowers were disproportionately targeted through

aggregations based on a set of criteria opaque to themselves (Dymski, Hernandez and Mohanty 2013; Wyly and Ponder, 2011). They were "enrolled in a kind of silent, encrypted community that had consequences for their lives and also for the global economy. Financialization, under the sign of the derivative, orders and organizes people and also different aspects of many people into new, cryptic aggregations all the time, constantly combining and recombining them... The logic of the derivative is one that seeks to identify, isolate and leverage these small differences, these deviances into large payback, or advantageous temporary configurations, to recognize a fragment of a pattern that can become a transformative moment" (Haiven, 2018: 192-93). Yet, as Haiven emphasises, the world the derivative itself has created is self-referential and opaque, in a sense it (im)mediates itself (im)mediately; "the derivative does not read and act upon the "real world"; it creates the reality it in turn reads and acts upon. It poses itself as the means to understand and gain agency within the chaos it itself creates. This financialized chaos, where everything has been transformed into a speculative asset to be aggregated and disaggregated, is the new order of sociality. The derivative is both its means and ends: it is a methodology of sorting and leveraging that creates the effects and sociality that is, recursively, its quarry" (Haiven, 2018: 192-93).

For Haiven, drawing on the work of Frederic Jameson, mediation in the modes of art and racial heteronormative capital, the rule of "fictitious capital," of financial wealth effects a "much broader transformation of the imagination" (Haiven, 2018: 108; on a brilliant deployment of mediation as art critical praxis see Grindon, 2023). Financial measurements, techniques, ideas, metaphors, symbolism and themes from financial management as well as all sorts of financial institutions colonise the realm of daily life and subjectivity, not through the recursions of the dialectic of self-overcoming as in Hegel, but through the infinitely spongy intensification of attention in the social validation of a momentary marketplace (Haiven, 2018: 108). Haiven explicitly addresses the problem of mediation (2018: 51): For Jameson, and other Marxist cultural critics, mediation is a complicated and fraught term. Capitalism is, ultimately, a system of material relationships whose ultimate horizon is its own endless pathological replication. But history has shown us that this system is extremely mutable, sometimes developing complex systems of dynamic equilibrium like Keynesianism in order to placate (some) workers and regulate (some) markets, sometimes throwing itself open to (seemingly) unfettered (allegedly) free markets, sometimes descending into fascism and authoritarianism to protect class interests. Constantly transforming in response to internal crises and external challenges, capitalism is never simply a pure system of accumulation. Rather, within its operations it develops, out of crisis-prone necessity and inexorable contradictions, all manner of "mediations": institutions, social structures, systems of value and processes that are somehow at once peripheral to capitalism's core logic yet vital to the system's reproduction. Institutions and valuation can both be mediations, as are the social and its processes; Black, brown, queer, working class, indigenous, disabled, and subaltern mediations of the conditions of exploitation, extraction, ecocide, anti-Blackness, and white supremacy can sometimes become a continuation of racial capital by 'other' mediations, obscuring complicities in the financialised forms of surplus value tied in with the white logistics (another mediation) of a neoliberal, masculinist, elite class domination, individuals of high net worth, obliquely banded together in pathological, competitive, crisis prone, and murderous national 'solidarity.' All the while, behind the backs of these so-called individuals, the value form of racial capital proliferates the abstract and material domination of exchange value, surplus labor time, and socially necessary labor time. Moishe Postone argues that labor under racial capital is a form of social mediation in itself, pointing to ... the growing contradiction between the potential of the developed forces of production and their existent social form. From this point of view, one can distinguish labor time necessary for capitalism from that which would be necessary for society were it not for capitalism. As my discussion of Marx's analysis has indicated, this distinction refers not only to the quantity of socially necessary labor but also to the nature of social necessity itself. That is, it points not only toward a possible large reduction in total labor time but also toward the possible overcoming of the abstract forms of social compulsion constituted by the value form of social mediation. Understood in these terms, "su-

perfluous" is the historically generated, immediate opposite of "necessary," a category of contradiction that expresses the growing historical possibility of distinguishing society from its capitalist form, and, hence, of separating out their previous necessary connection. The basic contradiction of capitalism, in its unfolding, allows for the judgment of the older form and the imagination of a newer one. My analysis of the dialectic of transformation and reconstitution has shown that, according to Marx, historical necessity cannot, in and of itself, give rise to freedom. The nature of capitalist development, however, is such that it can and does give rise to its immediate opposite—historical nonnecessity—which, in turn, allows for the determinate historical negation of capitalism. This possibility can only be realized, according to Marx, if people appropriate what had been constituted historically as capital. (Postone !not found!1993: 375) But then is not everything a kind of (im)mediation, with an intensively immediate and practically mediated aspect (Hegel nods)? All mediations are historically specific, because they are tied to the sense, force, and value of specific regimes of representation, discourse, language: mediation calls for an attention that is representationalized. In racially or caste stratified capitalist societies such as India, Europe, and North America, on the phylum of becoming that is the Black technical object (Amaro, 2023), historically specific desiring machines, both greater than individual humans and rhizomatic, molecular, intensive, and preindividual, extract surplus value from the attentional capacities of habituated necropoliticized populations. In these money-validating infrastructures of perception subaltern ecologies of sensation, jugaad economies, emerge and hack social institutions in collective (im)mediations of refusal, sabotage, prefiguration. Money (un)like art is a form of capitalist mediations (cf Pitts, 2017; Bueno, 2016; Bellifiore, ?). Haiven goes on: For instance, we might likewise imagine the institution of monogamous heterosexual marriage as a mediation. While it is not a central part of the economic logic of the system, it remains essential to the system in the way it structures the division of labor (which creates the "bourgeois" family as a space to extract surplus reproductive labor from women and provide economic security), everyday economic and social realities, and, more generally, a cultural system based on individualism and normative notions of "success." Marriage is a real thing (like money) with consequences, but it is also an idea, a set of practices or performances, and a socially and culturally enforced norm. Capitalism could, theoretically, do without marriage, but marriage plays a key role in the reproduction of capitalism today and, so, can't simply be discounted as "merely cultural." ...money under capitalism is an utterly unique and in some ways quintessential form of mediation. Like the water in the earth's biochemical systems, money is both the pivotal element of circulation and reproduction and, on a molecular level, perplexingly singular (Haiven, 2018: 51-52). No mediation, for Haiven it seems, is 'merely cultural.' All mediations worthy of the name have a certain force, sense, and value, and indeed are always already (im)mediately force, sense, and value, and thus if diagrammed on the transvaluating plane of the absolute survey there are no mediations as such, only a more or less structured, more or less immediately felt and historically constituted set of virtual-actual feedbacks and feedforwards, co-evolutionary interactions between material and spiritual forces, errant senses and sensations, and opaque (trans)valuations. For Haiven, mediation (understood through the paradox just articulated) is tied to the liberatory potential of radical movements through an experimentation in the arts of mediation itself. To actually discover the potentiality of radical alternatives, we would instead need to look precisely at the fraught intersection that has been my concern throughout this book: the methods by which we, the products of our own sociality, come to reflect on and re-craft our own sociality. That is to say, how we mediate and thereby shape our own cooperative potential ... shaping or re-crafting of our own sublime and limitless potential. What other forms might be possible? (Haiven, 2018: 157) For Haiven, mediations are real things and ideas instrumental to the project of emancipating our sublime and limitless potentials; they are also 'pure' ideology. Mediations, and the mediation of all mediations in racial capital, money, encloses, engulfs, and commands co-creation strategies in contemporary arts organising. The economic viability of the arts organisation in the UK today, after years of enforced austerity for the poor and the making more precarious of the already vulnerable, is now controlled in tick-box cultures of "care ecologies" lived by the gendered, classed, and raced precariat of the 'creative class'—as cruel optimism or

experienced in the art of 'benign pessimism' (Berlant, 2020; Haiven, 2018; Fraser, 2023; Bhattacharya, 2017; Pitts, 2017). These affective dispositions abstracting with and accumulating the value form are continually modulated in racial capital (Bueno, 2016). Haiven encourages us to see the mediations in art. "Art, too, then is a form of mediation," he writes (50). Moving past discussions mired in the inherently creative dimension of the human soul ("no doubt true"), Haiven considers art a "very particular social institution that arises under capitalism and, in various complicated and crisis-prone ways, exists to help reproduce that system" (Haiven, 2018: 157). Art mediates in the sense of ameliorates and legitimises racial capital.

This mediation is ongoing within the infrastructures and logistics of racial capital; art, beyond what Haiven folds into this term, can also become a reverberation of a certain unsettling, an uncanny (re)distribution of the sensible or re/deterritorialization of desiring flows. If what we have been positing up till now—that racial capital in the variable mesh of its changing intersections naturalises and fetishises class, gender, and racial difference; that social domination is involved in the enclosure of the ecological, affective body and its commons through technologies of valorisation, individualization, and governmentality—what modes of attention and becoming in aesthetic production radically disrupt the common and good sense of racial capital's distributions of the sensible (Deleuze, 1988; Massumi, 2015; Manning, 2016; Bueno, 2016; Somers-Hall, 2013; Ranci  re, 2010)? Art is also sometimes control as (in)discipline. Kin, you're not free, you're just loose, as Barak ad   Soleil reminds me.

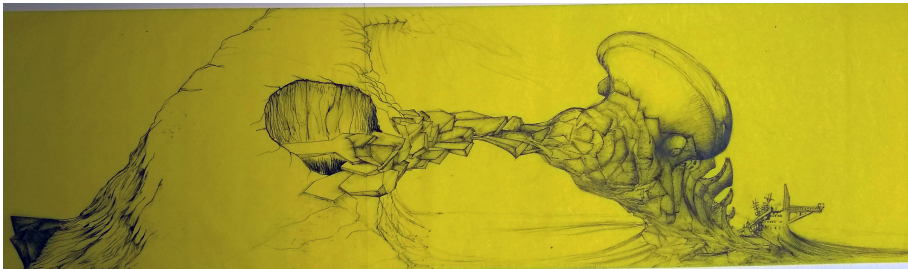


FIGURE 2 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, "A section of 'in[fra]structional', New dwgs - new worlds." Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll, (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

Thus, art today provides a kind of "North Star of freedom," the fulfilment and individualism on which all creative workers are increasingly expected to fix their gaze; it can offer an alternative asset class, "investment to shore up other aspects of an investor's portfolio; donations and service to art in the public interest (museums, galleries, etc.) creates the illusion that the financialized elite actually care about the fate of culture and humanity (and also offers potentially highly lucrative tax exemptions)" (Haiven, 2018: 52-53). Art, as a form of assetized mediation, "plays a variety of important roles in the reproduction of capitalist social and economic relations (Birch and Muniesa, 2020). But the other dimension of the Marxist approach is to note that, within various mediations, the seeds of crisis and of resistance are germinating. In the case of art, its utility to capitalist reproduction has afforded it a strange dimension of "relative autonomy," although one quickly disappearing (Haiven, 2018: 52-53; Anderson, 2021).

To anticipate our encounter with the racial capitalist history of attention as absolute survey and the problem of (im)mediation: through the course of these paradoxes there is no movement in (im)mediation; the figure of mediation returns always full circle it seems as a false, unhappy, and failed movement, an 'inauthentic' movement toward the authentic, itself always already colonised by the efficiency calculus of racial heteronormative capital. A classic statement of the failed movement of mediation can be found in Martin Heidegger's lectures on Hegel's Phenomenology. To follow Heidegger here is to affirm a circular contradiction: According to what has been said, what

is im-mediate for us, the mediators, is for our mediation not yet mediated. To the extent that from the outset we basically and constantly comport ourselves mediatingly, to the extent that we in principle and actually know everything as mediated or mediatable, we come across what is im-mediate only when we, who know absolutely, fail to take ourselves seriously enough, when we as it were condescend only to immediate knowledge. We do not surrender ourselves and our way of knowing by this condescension. The immediate to which we, the mediators, condescend always already stands under the dominion of mediation and sublation. The latter in turn can of course be what it is only when it condescends to what is un-mediated, precisely in order to mediate it. The im-mediate is already the im-mediated of mediation. It thus becomes clear who the 'we' are who right at the beginning say 'for us'. 'We' are those who know in terms of the science of absolute knowledge. From the beginning the 'we' has lost the option of being this or that person and thus of being, randomly, an ego. It is only for this perspective that we can and must ask which knowledge must as first be our object. In order to mediate absolutely, we must comport ourselves immediately, in keeping with the character of our mediation. Our non-mediation at the beginning amounts to our postponing all sublating and mediating; we comport ourselves toward knowledge absolutely relatively—receptively only—in that we do not as yet 'get thought moving in manifold ways'. 'Getting thought moving in manifold ways' does not mean thinking back and forth, but means rather the movement of absolute restlessness. To some extent this movement rests for a moment in knowing what is immediate. But it should be noted how the character and necessity of the possible first object is determined in terms of the knowledge of the knowers. It is not at all as if one were seeking some vague immediacy. Rather, the sense of the immediacy is determined from the very beginning, thus circumscribing the scope for what can and must be the first object of this knowledge. We the mediators must necessarily take as our first object that knowledge which as such is knowable in such a way as to demand on its own basis nothing else but pure apprehension. That is why the first object for us—which is knowledge as such—must be 'knowledge of the immediate.' A being is what Hegel calls this immediate as the object of that knowledge which is the immediate object for us who know absolutely. Accordingly, we have in our knowledge two objects, or one object twice....Hegel expresses this relation exactly by distinguishing the 'object for us' from the 'object for it'—for it, namely, for that knowing which is in each case the object for us. (Heidegger, 1988: 47-48; cf Derrida, 2016) We, who do not know in the terms of absolute science—we don't quote Heidegger to celebrate him or his white aporetic death cult which some consider to be at the apotheosis of a certain European tradition of philosophy—we quote him to intuit better the resonations and conundrums of our immediately mediated present: To begin again within and against Hegel, then: How does the Self renounce its independence in the *Phenomenology*? It's well-known that, earlier in the text, Hegel had expounded the murderous dynamic of the master/bondsman (or slave) dialectic. Žižek and Silva have commented at length on this violence, its structural necessity to modern thought, passing through Herder and Hegel, for Silva, beginning and ending with Lacano-Lenin for Žižek. Hegel in the passage quoted above has his own diagrams, they are suffocatingly recursive, a perpetual emergence through the serial incorporation of Otherness of an ever-higher order of self-sameness and identity. What in its immediacy is the self in itself? Hegel had already shown that to unify the in-itself Self with the for-itself Self, the extrusion toward, rationalist extraction in what Silva calls the engulfment of the Other, requires a certain murder (metaphorically and literally, the Other/Slave must die, or at least wager their life, in Hegel). But in the same movement this self returns to itself in Absolute Reason with the gain of a (multiply haunted) self-consciousness in and for itself, a supposed unity that is, however, now materio-spiritual and irreducibly relational, in perpetual relation of force, sense, and value now not merely of representation but in the proposition of composing with the Other, the Master-Slave scene has now become a veritable *mise-en-abîme* of relationality. The dialectic is a poetics of relation and recognition, denied or negated twice (Glissant, 1997). To say Hegel's Other heading (Derrida) happened on the slave ship that forcibly tore Africans from their kin and lands, in the ship's wake, as Sharpe (2016) might caution, or on the plantations throughout the settler colonial world that extracted superprofits

for Euro-American capital (Robinson, 2020; Wilderson, 2010), or in CLR James (2022) and Buck-Morss's (2009) Haiti, or in the archives of African slavery through which Saidiya Hartmann narrates her post-natalist searches (Hartman, 2008; 2022); or in a Chicanx iteration of Anzúdua's colonial borderlands where subalterns develop an intuitive and anticipatory facultad for white supremacist violence, or with Burrough's interzones of animal and plant becomings, and with Frank Chin !not Found!(?) we stand with the Chinese Americans who built the railroads and cleaned people's clothes—these were different sites for the production and contestation of anti-Blackness, orientalism(s), white settler colonial subjectivity, and subaltern alterities.

There is (in)determination, there is (im)mediation here, a cut-as-relation with the Other, the individualised Self's emergence into Reason, unhappy but wiser, hip to the ethical irony of Hamlet soliloquizing into a skull—this happens only when the Other/Object is cut off, abstracted, extracted, and reduced to its category. The category is the cut, at one with the determination; the category is immediately negative determination. There is no distance, no duration between the category, the cut, and the determination, they are all immediately one, and all are pure negativity. As pure, naïve-of-admixture category, the object is still unmediated. In an infinite movement of a judgement of self as a Thing, an object like any other, just a shiny skull and some worn flesh, this judgement nonetheless suspends itself. It is in and for this self-suspension that the category furthers determination, the category of Other/Object as a self-superseding antithesis of the self. It is the moment of the infinite judgement that shifts the self from immediacy to mediation. The self constitutes for-itselfness through extractive abjection and what Silva marks as a certain engulfment of the negated Other/object.

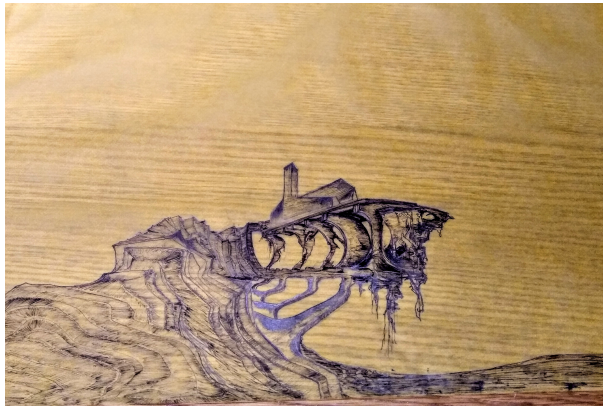


FIGURE 3 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, A section of 'in[fra]structural', "New dwgs - new worlds" Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll, (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

These are all realms of a certain White Absolute. In the devouring face of this absolute whiteness, Deleuze and Guattari urged a practice of becoming minor. Mark the persistent resolution into concrete universality of their 'categories', a kind of dissensus of the categories in the realm of an intensive universality. There is no becoming-majoritarian; majority is never becoming. All becoming is minoritarian. Women, regardless of their numbers, are a minority, definable as a state or subset; but they create only by making possible a becoming over which they do not have ownership, into which they themselves must enter; this is a becoming-woman affecting all of humankind, men and women both. The same goes for minor languages: they are not simply sublanguages, idiolects or dialects, but potential agents of the major language's entering into a becoming-minoritarian of all of its dimensions and elements. We should distinguish between minor languages, the major language, and the becoming-minor of the major language.

Minorities, of course, are objectively definable states, states of language, ethnicity, or sex with their own ghetto territorialities, but they must also be thought of as seeds, crystals of becoming whose value is to trigger uncontrollable movements and deterritorializations of the mean or majority. That is why Pasolini demonstrated that the essential thing, precisely in free indirect discourse, is to be found neither in language A, nor in language B, but “in language X, which is none other than language A in the actual process of becoming language B.” There is a universal figure of minoritarian consciousness as the becoming of everybody, and that becoming is creation. One does not attain it by acquiring the majority. The figure to which we are referring is continuous variation, as an amplitude that continually oversteps the representative threshold of the majoritarian standard, by excess or default. In erecting the figure of a universal minoritarian consciousness, one addresses powers (puissances) of becoming that belong to a different realm from that of Power (Pouvoir) and Domination. Continuous variation constitutes the becoming-minoritarian of everybody, as opposed to the majoritarian Fact of Nobody. Becoming-minoritarian as the universal figure of consciousness is called autonomy. It is certainly not by using a minor language as a dialect, by regionalizing or ghettoizing, that one becomes revolutionary; rather, by using a number of minority elements, by connecting, conjugating them, one invents a specific, unforeseen, autonomous becoming. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987: 106) The becoming autonomous of consciousness is one with a universal becoming minoritarian. But then consciousness, fractal and technogenetic, returns us to the concept of the absolute survey. This concept comes from Raymond Ruyer, one of the contributors to contemporary new materialism, and is, indeed, vital for a post-phenomenology of attention. What is the diagram of an absolute survey? How does the diagram account for the positionality, the radical standpoint of the diagrammer(s) of the revolutionary diagram? Consider these “diagram repositories” from visual and sound artist Ranjit Kandalgaonkar’s work, linking the histories of shipping and shipbreaking to the emergent non-coinciding resonant unities between disparate materials, paper, pen, and imagined machineries, that is to the shape of truths to come, a speculation on morphogenetic affectivity across matter, time, and becoming. A memory of the future in our dystopic present?

Where does Kandalgaonkar’s speculative diagrammatology take us? This question will be better posed in subsequent work. For now we will tarry with his scroll drawings diagramming the monstrous technicity of post-capitalist ecologies.



FIGURE 4 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, A section of 'in[fra]structional', New dwgs - new worlds, Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

3 | SILVA’S SCENE OF (RE)WRITING TRANSPARENCY IN HEGEL

Diagrams of revolutionary becoming resist the Eurocentric demands of the clear and distinct, of a pre-given transparency. This demand for transparency is part and parcel of the representational regime of colonial attention, white attention’s scene of writing, which historically mutilated the racialized and gendered subaltern subject through the dissimulations of transparency. It is this scene of transparency that Denise Ferreira da Silva’s *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (2007) so precisely stages. In her critical analysis of race in a global frame, Silva unpacks “how the racial, the cul-

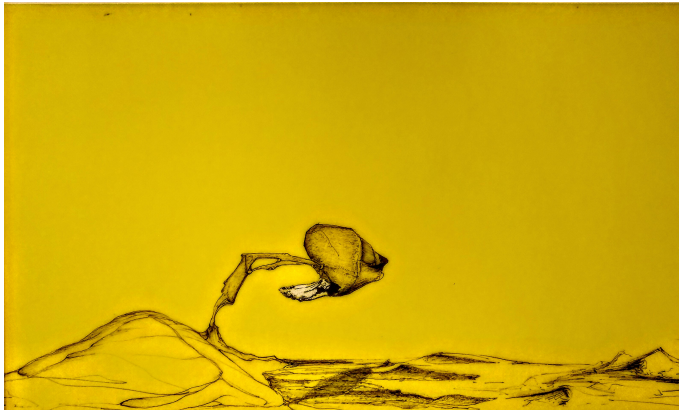


FIGURE 5 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, A section of 'in[fra]structional', New dwgs - new worlds, Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

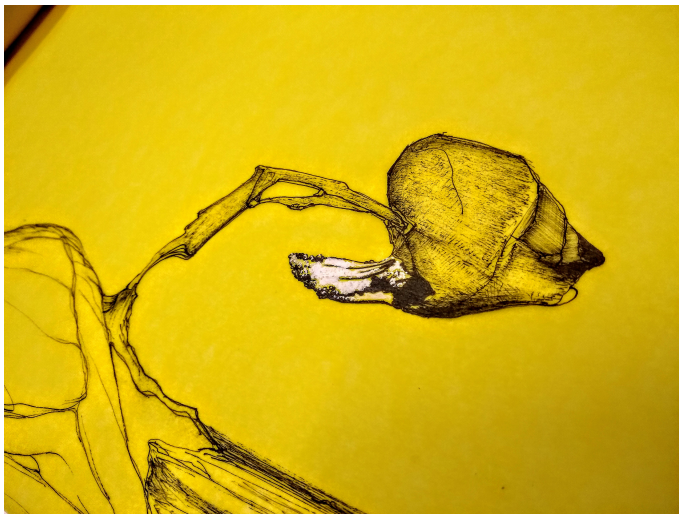


FIGURE 6 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, A section of 'in[fra]structional', New dwgs - new worlds, Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

tural, and the nation institute modern subjects: by charting their contexts of emergence, describing their conditions of production, and delimiting their signifying effects" (Silva, 2007: xxxvi). This, I argue, is the effect of the transparency thesis, the ontological assumption governing the social descriptors universality and historicity that has survived the death of the subject. The fact that it remains at the core of critical accounts of racial subjection and "post" mappings of the global configuration is clearly reflected in the postmodern refashioning of the cultural. Despite the patronizing project of giving "voice" or "agency" to their object, these anthropologists' intentions have (as always) been good. The critical reassessment of the fixity and boundedness of culture has also deflated the discipline's "ethnographic authority." Nevertheless, the cultural still authorizes (re)writings of the others of Europe, but now as incarcerated subjects

of cultural difference. Because they presuppose the ruling ontological premise, namely, transparency, ethnographic descriptions of the global subaltern as a cultural "other" (re)produce the racial's effect of signification, which is to write all that is particular to post-Enlightenment Europe as a signifier of the subject, the transparent "I." When deployed to address the products and practices of people of color, the cultural produces a kind of transparency that is self-defeating, as is the case with Gilroy's "racial community of interpretation" and its countercultural "politics of transfiguration." No matter how fluid, hybrid, or unbounded, when addressing a collectivity the racial has already inscribed as subaltern, the cultural acquires a descriptive sense that does not and cannot communicate interiority, as is the case with the nation, the historical signifier. It does not and cannot precisely because it remains fully within a scientific (anthropological) terrain of signification. As such, it reinforces the effects of signification of the racial: exterior determination. In short, it cannot institute a transparent (interior/temporal) —that is, self-determined—"I." (Silva, 2007: xxxiv-xxxv) Implicating Hegel for the violence he affirms in the closed set of procedures that is the structure of the Rational Self of Universal Poesis, Silva shows how the ontological assumption governing the discursive practices of universality and historicity is that it be and remain transparent. Later Silva develops her incisive critique of Hegel and the transparent I, what Ruyer calls the axiological cogito (2016: 1), what I am calling here the authentic I of White Mythology. Silva suggests that cultural transparency (its signifying authentic meaning) is a displacement of the axiologically transparent cogito; cultural difference is the new prison. Not unlike Hegel's murderous dialectic of Self-Master and Other-Slave, anthropology's culturally authentic Other, the signifier of a certain racialisation produced through 'exterior determination,' cannot institute a self-determined "I".

Thus: "Although the critical field is packed with denunciations and rejections of transparency and intimations that transcendental poesis restricts the transparent I to the boundaries of post-Enlightenment Europe, none relates this version of the play of reason to nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientific projects that attempt to 'discover' the truth of man. My reading shows that these result from the fact that Hegel's statement resolves but does not dissipate exteriority and the ontological context it announces when it describes how reason plays its productive role in the scene of engulfment, in which it becomes a desiring, living, or productive force" (2007: 71). As I noted above, and as Silva's work also suggests, from the beginning Western scientific reason established modern thought as a murderous, engulfing, incorporating relation with the Other-Object; Hegel's dialectic, in Silva's analysis, unfolds a "play of reason" that engages the stage of exteriority even as it reduces it to a moment of self-unfolding 'spirit'. This is the Hegelian hauntology: a (im)mediating engulfment apprehends but does not obliterate what it appropriates, the Other lives on in the Derridean sense of haunting. In haunting of engulfment, self-consciousness cannot retain its privileged place as the ground for ontological and epistemological accounts if its intimacy with universal reason is denied. These contradictions lead to a certain rewriting of the play of reason. Hegel's successful reformulation produced an account of the trajectory of self-consciousness in which inner determination and self-productivity become the two attributes it shares with universal reason. Put differently, drawing from Kant's and Herder's interiorizing of universal reason, Hegel reconstituted the Kantian formal ("pure reason") universal, the transcendental, as a historical (desiring or living) thing, namely, productive (interior-temporal) force, "Spirit," the transcendental "I." By resolving Reason into Freedom, Nature into History, Space into Time, things of the world into the (thinking, knowing, acting, desiring, or living) subject, Hegel rewrote the play of reason as transcendental poesis, thus consolidating the fields of modern representation, namely, science and history, the productive contexts that provided the signifying strategies that composed post-Enlightenment onto-epistemological accounts. Nevertheless, I will show that the operative signifying gesture, here, engulfment, comprehends but does not obliterate exteriority, and in doing so it merely pushes back the horizon of death even as it recuperates that whose renunciation sustained the assertion of the possibility of knowing with certainty, the search for the in-itself ("final causes" or "essences") of things. (Silva, 2007, p. 72-73)

Here we attend to a bare repetition (in Deleuze's sense [1994]) at the heart of Hegel's universal reason, a

veritable murder machine. Thus, Hegel transcendentalises work, or what Silva calls poesis. Something happens: “the theater of reason became the arena of history as the universe became the product of the temporal trajectory of a self-producing and self-moving transcendental (interior-temporal) I, namely, “Spirit,” that in which form and content, essence and existence, the substance and its modifications, cause and effects are resolved [repetitively]. Though everything that is and can become is at once its raw material, instrument, and goal, only one thing, the one that shares reason’s powers, the mind, can recognize that this is so” (Silva, 2007: 73-74). Here Hegel’s reliance on a posited pure or authentic reason and its modality becomes critical to the story of racial formation in the reconstitution of subjectivity after the African slave trade, indigenous genocides, and European colonialism.

What Silva finds in Hegel’s formulations “secures self-consciousness in self-determination by bridging the difference . . . between regulation and representation in the moment of transparency, when self-consciousness recognizes that nothing is exterior to itself because, like itself, every existing thing is a moment, an actualization of spirit, the cause and end of the universe with which it enjoys a profound intimacy” (Silva, 2007: 73-74). In her expression, Silva is shifting us beyond any given scene of writing, past Hegel’s world historical white wor(l)ds, insipid dialectical structures encircled within structures, here one also ‘reads’ a certain admiration for the in/finite totality brought by the dialectic. But perhaps that’s not how these words—I mean Silva’s words—should be read?

Silva shows well how Hegel secures self-determination for the white sovereign subject by poorly posing the question concerning how to know extended (exterior, affectable) things. Silva diagrams how Hegel mobilizes the concepts of actualization and recognition to provide an account of the trajectory of Spirit as temporal process of self-production through which an immediate and then mediated self-consciousness learns of a profound, if murderous intimacy between itself and (other) things. Actualization and recognition are crucial to the “writing of the ‘Same,’ each gains a particular meaning when deployed in Hegel’s account of how self-consciousness is positioned in relation to the ‘world of things,’ the one given to it, and the ‘world of men,’ the one it produces. Through the engulfment of exteriority, in the movement of actualization and recognition, the version of the play of reason as transcendental poesis institutes the transparency thesis, the ruling modern onto-epistemological assumption, while allowing for projects of knowledge that produce modern subjects that remain before it” (Silva, 2007: 73). Why is the ontological securitisation of the Same a scene of writing (representation), even if writing is itself understood to be a sensorimotor circuit beyond representation or irreducibly entangled and engulfed in an intuitive sensation prior to signification? Here we are at the threshold of representation with Silva.

Silva argues that in the *Phenomenology* Hegel describes (white, individualised, property-owning) self-consciousness recognizing the profound intimacy between itself and exterior things as distinct moments of the actualization of spirit. This transforms the “thinking thing into a desiring thing,” Silva notes—in a move that departs from the scene of writing ambivalently—the ontology of the scene of engulfment, which nonetheless attempts a reconciliation of the scene of representation (writing) and the scene of regulation (racial capitalist normativity and control). She moves with Hegel, ‘against his grain’, in frisson: “self-consciousness” Silva argues learns from scientific reason the misapprehended “play of phenomena,” in which knowing things consists in the representational processes of recognition. The “universe” in a particular stage of its actualization toward and partly through a transcendental consciousness, the self-determining because self-producing force whose ‘essence’ it shares. Through this movement of representational engulfment — actualization (exteriorization) and recognition (interiorization) — self-consciousness aspires to become the subject of a transcendental poesis in Hegel, who posits its function as actualizing the possibilities and potentialities of Spirit, to bring it into existence by realizing its ‘inner force’ (essence). The knowing subject is also a desiring thing because the realization of its “intrinsic difference,” self-determination, requires that first the subject move outside of itself, where it finds negation, in a sense becomes negation, the moment of the regulation in things, and then second recuperates not the elements but the authentic whole, or essence of the Other, returns them back into interiority, now conceived

fully in the scene of representation. In this account, mediation takes a different role: the means of knowledge are neither the human body nor the tools of scientific reason, but the things to be known, namely, consciousness and exterior things, “which are external to each other only as long as consciousness ignores that its truth is to become consciousness for-itself, that is, when it recognizes that self-regulation is only a vanishing moment in its trajectory toward recognition” (Silva, 2007: 74-75). Silva critically mirrors the *mise en abîme* of Hegel's bare repetitions, repetition of a surround of mediation that aspires to abject difference-in-itself. Which diagrams can desubjugate the processual becomings of difference-in-itself?

Reverberating with Silva's entangled, but nonetheless representational critique of transparency and violence in Hegel, let us return to our vitalist and non-organic encounter with attention, let us move then with our pragmatic diagrammatology of attention. We could consider attention in the drama of ‘psychology’ as dialectical movement between identity and difference in Hegel's philosophy of Absolute Spirit. We return thus to problem of immediacy in Hegel. For Hegel it is the mastery of language that differentiated humans from ‘all the rest’. Key to this process, which involved the life and death struggle for recognition between master and slave as we have seen, is the role of attention in the immediate processes of feeling through what Hegel terms ‘external intuition’: External Intuition (*Anschauung*) §446. (1) Spirit, which is determined naturally as Soul, which as Consciousness stands in relation to this determination as if to an exterior object, and which as Intellect finds itself thus determined, is this uncoordinated intermingling in itself, wherein it is Matter-like (*stoffartig*) to itself and possesses the entire material of its awareness. For the sake of the Immediacy in which it at first exists, Spirit therein is a mere individual and common—subjective Spirit. It thus appears as Feeling (*Gefühl*). (2014: 115) Being, according to Hegel, is first determined in sensory ‘Feeling’, then in the fixing of ‘Attention’, and third in the unity of the two. What is immediately present in Sensation is an encompassing, flowing stream of shapes, movements, colours, sounds, smells, bodily feelings, urges, imaginings, remembrances, and the like. Spirit appropriates them into its systematic life or coherent living by isolating one object from that encompassing stream and focusing sustained or “formal” attention upon it. In a formal determination, one has located an external essence without yet articulating it (Wood, 2014: 118). Full articulation entails its concrete relations to the whole from which one has abstracted the object by focused attention. Attention posits, posits Hegel, against its own inwardness the determination of Feeling or Sensation as Being, but as negative, in other words as abstract being other than itself. “In this way Intelligence determines the content of Feeling or Sensation as being outside itself, projects it into Space and Time, which are the forms wherein it immediately views things. According to Consciousness, the material is only its own object, a relative other: but by Spirit it receives rational determination as the other of itself” (Hegel, 2014: 118-19). In Wood's interpretation, it is through “Attention one is absorbed again in what is present outside one's self, but in an active and focused manner” (Wood, 2014: 119-20). This implies, however, that attention can also be absorbed in what is ‘present’ inside one's self, and in a passive and diffused manner—attention is indeterminately an intensive mode of being traversing inside and outside, rendering the distinction itself undecidable in the Derridean sense (1988). For Hegel, on the contrary, such attentional absorption is possible only in a subject “self-directed from the distance of Intellect, not simply passively being carried by whatever sensation flows through one's consciousness. So, greater interiorization is greater exteriorization – that is, the deeper the level from which one attends to what is exterior, the deeper one is capable of penetrating what is exterior” (Wood, 2014: 119-20).

This is Spirit's mode of encountering the world that proceeds through transparency and engulfment (*interiorisation*) as we have seen in our consideration of Silva's work (although following it in Hegel's actual text is anything but transparent!). This procedure is affected by and affects attention. As Wood points out in his commentary, “What is immediately present in Sensation is an encompassing, flowing stream of shapes, movements, colours, sounds, smells, bodily feelings, urges, imaginings, remembrances, and the like. Spirit begins to appropriate them into its systematic life or coherent living by isolating one object from that encompassing stream and focusing sustained attention upon it”

(2014: 118). The embodied capacity of attention enables the yet-to-be-subject to depart from this immediate mode of encountering the world. As Hegel parses it, "In the case of Feeling or Sensation, as in all its other features, Attention is the abstract focus of Spirit in the same direction, without which there is nothing for it [to work with]. Attention is active Interiorization, making its object its own, but as the still formal self-determination of Intelligence" (2014: 118). The transcendental condition of interiorization (engulfment, in Silva's discourse) is the affective capacity of attention which is transversal to any inside/outside distinction; attention is prior to and the preindividual field for interiorization (*Erinnerung* in German; cf Wood, 2014: 122). Attention is the materio-spiritual, energetic process of indetermination that perpetually haunts negation, or determination.

Attention as an (im)mediated indetermination of interiorization and exteriorization, I am arguing, is central to the 'ad hominen' critique of racial capitalism (Marx, 1975; qtd. in Bonefeld, 2001). As I have argued elsewhere, attention is central to the real abstractions of capital (Rai, *forthcoming*). Today especially as fascist, white supremacist, Hindutva, and settler Zionist forces mobilize popular support in disparate parts of the world, how to do things with attention is a question of life and death and the struggle for viable revolutionary becomings. Toscano's *Late Fascism* (2023) helps to clarify this point: But if we wish to attend to the fascist potentials in neoliberalism, I think it particularly imperative to attend to those analyses of the latter that foreground the shaping function of race and racism in the development and implantation of neoliberal policies and ideology. To be more precise, I think we can say that attending to neoliberalism's racial regimes provides incomparable evidence for the thesis that it enacts a differential reinforcement of the state which in its turn compounds and refunctions those "fatal couplings of power and difference" that, according to Stuart Hall, define the making, unmaking and remaking of race. In this regard, I think that much is to be gained by exploring a conceptual and analytical formula advanced by Ruth Wilson Gilmore, in the ambit of her ongoing political and geographical investigation of the nexus of state capacities, class warfare and racialisation in the "prison-industrial complex" – the anti-state state. Inwardisation as an extractive mode of valorising attention is one of the fascist potentials of neoliberal racial capital; and a parallel formation in India's Hindutvaized political discourse is the violent drive to assimilate all differences (e.g. Southeast Asian Buddhisms) to the 'Hindu Rashtra' (Bhatty and Sundar 2020; Basu, 2020; Mehta, 2017: 21). Overturning the "development and implantation of neoliberal policies and ideology" is a question of a collective decolonising of this mode of attention, a perceptual mode that is also a white mythology (Derrida, 1983).

To conclude this convoluted convolute, we end with some thoughts on the stranger from Saidiya Hartman. In *Lose my Mother* (2008), Hartman movingly recounts the precarious being of the stranger (obruni) in Ghanaian and (by implication) Global north societies; the stranger becomes a kind of deconstructive lever in her critique of the Ghanaian politics of the touristic memory industry for slavery and the vagaries of postcolonial nationhood (Derrida, 1981). She writes, I was the stranger in the village, a wandering seed bereft of the possibility of taking root. Behind my back people whispered, *dua ho mmire*, a mushroom that grows on the tree has no deep soil. Everyone avoided the word "slave," but we all knew who was who. As a "slave baby," I represented what most chose to avoid: the catastrophe that was our past, and the lives exchanged for India cloth, Venetian beads, cowrie shells, guns, and rum. And what was forbidden to discuss: the matter of someone's origins. Obruni forced me to acknowledge that I didn't belong anywhere. The domain of the stranger is always an elusive elsewhere. I was born in another country, where I also felt like an alien and which in part determined why I had come to Ghana. I had grown weary of being stateless. Secretly I wanted to belong somewhere or, at least, I wanted a convenient explanation of why I felt like a stranger ... The most universal definition of the slave is a stranger. Torn from kin and community, exiled from one's country, dishonored and violated, the slave defines the position of the outsider. She is the perpetual outcast, the coerced migrant, the foreigner, the shamefaced child in the lineage. Contrary to popular belief, Africans did not sell their brothers and sisters into slavery. They sold strangers: those outside the web of kin and clan relationships, nonmembers of the polity, foreigners and

barbarians at the outskirts of their country, and lawbreakers expelled from society. In order to betray your race, you had first to imagine yourself as one. The language of race developed in the modern period and in the context of the slave trade. The very term “slavery” derived from the word “Slav,” because Eastern Europeans were the slaves of the medieval world. At the beginning of modernity, slavery declined in Europe as it expanded in Africa, although as late as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was still possible to purchase “white” slaves—English, Spanish, and Portuguese captives in the Mediterranean ports of North Africa. The Iberians can be credited, according to one historian, “for restricting bondage, for the first time in history to peoples of African descent.” It was not until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the line between the slave and the free separated Africans and Europeans and hardened into a color line. (2008: 4-5) How do we attend to this entangled history in all the complexities of its complicities? What does it say to our collective, singular and individuated becomings? How do we prefigure solidary emancipation in relation to this history of violence, expropriation, and abstraction of the stranger? Is the figure of the stranger—which gender, which race, which class is this stranger, with reference to what able-bodied, disabled, neurodiverse aspects of this Black stranger?—is the stranger a potential framework for solidary emancipation? Could the Palestinian refugee or the Dalit be linked to this genealogy of the stranger, to then also of an abstract strangeness? What does it mean to attend to, to care for, to honour the stranger in all that we attend to? The stranger is a ghost of the enslaved African subject, the stranger is a living being in our present, in our midst, in us. The haunting of the Black stranger, dehumanised and animalised, this stranger, the violence of the strange (abnormal, monster) haunts all our becomings.

How does this relate to a political economy of attention? We can say that memory, its politics and its archivalisation, is a kind of attention, a (in)voluntary memory being a kind of unconscious-intentional flux of attention. The value form of this memory-attention resides in the commodified bodies of racialised surplus populations from the 15th century on and in the speculative property values for slave (and Holocaust and postcolonial . . . and . . .) tourisms. Hartman allows us to see the complex, intersectional torsions of this commodification of the Black woman's body and the on-going counter-insurgency against Black people that is at least as old as that history of commodification . . .



FIGURE 7 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, “Installation view of ‘in[fra]structional’” Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

4 | THE DIALECTIC AND DIFFERENCE-IN-ITSELF

Only one endless repetition: difference-in-itself. All dialectical diagrammaticisms—the cognitive map-diagrams a la Frederic Jameson, or Bourdieu, David Harvey, or to an extent in Max Haiven (2018) of oppositional, mechanistic, contradiction- (un)happy cognitive maps, which have no outside, tending to paranoid machines of control—repeat the same poorly posed problem: does difference only matter when it passes a quantitative, representational, and logical threshold of contradiction, thresholds of identity and sense, even as with Jameson who incorporates a quite catholic interpretation of (among a resonant set of thinkers and communist revolutionaries) Deleuze and Guattari's work into his post-Adornian, post-Sartrean, and post-Fanonian Marxism. Such dialectical diagrams repeat (always with an unacknowledged difference) the violent Hegelian interiorization of, against difference-in-itself. It is not post-identitarian hyperbole to link this violence with the history of anti-Blackness and the many on-going indigenous genocides that white logistics and brown complicity have enshrined as the condition of possibility of racial heteronormative knowledge and queer-friendly capitalism—this is something that Ali Lara brilliantly diagrams for a radical organising of disparate brown, indigenous, and queer undercommons (Lara, 2020). In certain ecologies of attention decolonising and commoning modes of social reproduction recommends themselves to praxis, and this question of techno-perceptual assemblages of becoming is quite ironically addressed sometimes in everyday hacking and repurposing cultures (Rai, 2019).

They point us to Truths of Times to Come: the representational regime of a certain empire has come to an end, with the ironic result that the modulations of neuro-marketing and machine learning have become the generalised capitalist celebration-as-capture of the fact that only one thing repeats endlessly across the pluriverses (Escobar, 2018): Difference-in-Itself.™ Or creativity branded as infinite valorisation of an infinitely complex authenticity in the arts of IP rent (Saintilan and Schreiber, 2023; Adorno, 2013; Harvey, 2012). The dialectic of history—the seemingly endless nightmare of genocide, extraction, and expropriation—has swallowed up difference in itself and shat out another global brand that's right now live streaming on YouTube (Curtis, 2011).

Revolutionary becomings exceed the actualisation of revolutions. People say that revolutions turn out horribly. But they confuse two things: revolutionary potentiality or stochastic emancipatory becomings and the revolution's fetishized and stabilised actualisations in representation, its narrative of an inevitably unhappy consciousness. A revolution is not a metaphor, it is an event that exceeds its actualisation, but this excess is not a naïve or biological vitalism. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari pointed this out repeatedly and each time with a difference: revolutionary becoming is transversal to all revolutions, indeed to all politics as such. Becoming is the preindividual condition of possibility and principal of potentialisation of a given assemblage (affective agencement: the layout of affect). It is entangled (Barad, 2007) in the material, (non)dialectical, (im)mediated, spiritual, and affective lines of flight and expression of the revolutionary abolition of the totality of racial capital. We say Total Liberation! with Françoise Vergès. Which diagrammatic attention—affirming which becomings?—can reverberate with this insight?

All that aspires to life performs a certain absolute resonance and absolute unity, an absolute or non-dimensional survey, in a preindividual perception of the environment (we must question and move beyond the organicism implied in 'life', toward non-organic becomings). For Ruyer, Mark Hansen notes, consciousness, to be what it is, "must possess itself absolutely" (Hansen, 2016: ix). All of life is a non-coinciding resonant and indeterminate ecology surveying itself absolutely and without spatialisation. And yet there is always a non-organic outside to your singular non-coinciding absolute unity, a stranger to your authentic power of action and change and invention, your ordinal vulnerability shared with others and your ecology at a given moment, x at $t-0$. Your potential labour power beyond the gimmick (Ngai, !Not Found!2020). You and they welcome its encounter as a once and future memory of Hartman's obruni, Haraway's promises of monsters (2013), what Silva names the temporality of the future anterior. The monsters will

have been a transformative manifesting with the furies of the spirits against injustice and stupidity rather than the algorithmic glorification of different more or less probable monopolies and oligopolies of the value form, of the negation of the negation of patriarchalised desire and pleasure, of the signifier as brand vehicle and financial derivative, the 'creative' administration of the participatory culture of the brand, within the individualised indebtedness of racial capitalist financialisation. Obviously the right solution is that the "description" or "observation" of the mind (or the subjective domain) is a whole other matter than the subjectivity of the described or observed "mind." Dunne's conception, though it amused many people, has not had great success in contemporary philosophy. But perhaps we have not carefully examined the consequences of the negation of infinite regress. Let us return to the surface of the seen table. It does not obey geometric laws. It is a surface seized in all of its details, without a third dimension. It is an "absolute surface," which is not relative to any point of view external to it, which knows itself without observing itself. If I were to place my eye on the table, I would see nothing, but I need not be "at a distance" from the sensation to see it extended. In contrast, I cannot turn around the sensation to consider it from various angles. "I" (my organism) can turn around the table to obtain different sensations, but "I" cannot turn around my sensation once I obtain it. (Ruyer, *!Not Found!?:* 92) With Lacan's floating tin can (2018), we could ask, does the table survey us, or what happens when the object returns with a non-organic survey? What is key, it seems to me, in Ruyer's notion of the absolute survey, is that it is a dynamically feedbacked self-survey, capable of enfolding and being enfolded by gradients of intensive non-organic matter in an ongoing morphogenetic co-evolution, a kind of pre-individual intuition of a self-in-ecological/technological-relation with O/others and their environment(s): the diagram of the moving whole, the non-coinciding resonant unity, your ecology is right now. The "magical" conception, like the "spiritist" conception of consciousness as a force, consists in believing that this force is not subject to the restriction of a certain order of magnitude or that it is not subject to the use of technical means when it tries to surpass, in its efficacy, a certain order of magnitude. But within the limit of this order, a part of the "magical" conception becomes true. In a domain of absolute survey, it can be said that there is magical participation of parts, action at a distance, omnipotence of thought, mnemonic invocation similar to the invocation of "spirits," and immediate incarnation of significations. Because we are true and— in the sense in which contemporary physics employs this term— microscopic individuals, our immediate experience is naturally that of the magical mode of efficacy and force. By itself, objective and scientific experience teaches us about the relays that our action uses. But our direct experience suggests that it is our will that moves our arm, that it is indeed our intention that provokes our movements and our ideas. In the belief in magical action, the abuse has consisted only in extending to the outside world what is perfectly true of our domain of survey and direct inspection. The extension of extraorganic technology has made true the error of magic; it has given us power over the outside world, because it consisted precisely in complying with the very conditions that already made possible the passage from rudimentary organisms, like the molecules and the virus, to complex organisms. (Ruyer, 2016: 207). This is a thorough anti-Hegelianism, in the sense that Adorno riffs off Hegel in the first few pages of *Minima Moralia* (2005: 2): The subject still feels sure of its autonomy, but the nullity demonstrated to subjects by the concentration camp [or the slave plantation, the refugee camp, the reservation, the colony, the asylum, the prison, the factory, the school, the home, etc] is already overtaking the form of subjectivity itself. Subjective reflection, even if critically alerted to itself, has something sentimental and anachronistic about it: something of a lament over the course of the world, a lament to be rejected not for its good faith, but because the lamenting subject threatens to become arrested in its condition and so to fulfil in its turn the law of the world's course. Fidelity to one's own state of consciousness and experience is forever in temptation of lapsing into infidelity, by denying the insight that transcends the individual and calls his substance by its name. It is based on a diagram of formation as feedback loops that become procedural for a closed set open by affecting and being affected through those feedback loops, and through differentiated function and sometimes emergent organisations of more or less complexity, that is invention. Relative to the multiplicity of

details in my sensation, "I"—the indefinable "I"—appears as the unity, as a unity endowed with ubiquity. Here as well, sensation and subjectivity generally escape the ordinary laws of physics. It has been said that the core of the theory of (special) relativity amounts to the realization that one cannot be in two locations at once. In this sense, the absolute subjective expanse escapes the jurisdiction of the theory of relativity. "I" am simultaneously in all the locations of my visual field. There is no step-by-step propagation, no limit speed, for such a domain. If I look at two clocks in a single glimpse, they will be one, despite their difference. There is no "absolute elsewhere" in a subjective domain, because there is no absolute alterity between details. If I were to number the cases of the checkerboard, the squares at one end would be farther away from the squares at the opposite end than from the middle squares. And yet this variable distance, which appears in the ordered figure of sensation, is not a true distance that would require physical means and energy to be overcome. The notion of absolute survey, of nondimensional survey, is the key not only to the problem of consciousness but also to the problem of life. It allows us to grasp the difference between primary consciousness and secondary consciousness ... (2016, 2016: 3-4) Why is the I indefinable, is it not in relation to an always already murdered Other/Object (as we have seen in our encounter with Hegel)? But we are our ancestors. If the I is defined as the particular-become-universal in and as a non-coinciding resonant (pragmatic) unity, something strategically yet authentically opaque, the non-coincidence and the functional resonance problematizes, indeed refuses the reification, determination, translational (im)mediation, and the abstract category of unity implicit in racial capitalist subjectivity. As a non-coinciding immanently resonant, pragmatically closed set with feedbacked procedures connected in various ways with its environment, this kind of unity participates in the category of unity but does not belong there (Derrida, 1983, 2018; Rai, 2004). But we must also say, with Ruyer, that from certain conjunctural intersections of physics, power, history, form, sensation, affordance, and affect the unity is absolute, non-spatial, immediate, pre-individual, and pre-perceptual; an ecology intuited without distance or sight, all at once, at the speed of infinity registered by the (non?) living form through an instantaneous "absolute survey" in sensory, or what Ruyer calls, primary consciousness. In other words, there is at bottom only a single mode of consciousness: primary consciousness, form-in-itself of every organism and at one with life. The secondary, sensory consciousness is the primary consciousness of cerebral areas. Because the cortex is modulated by external stimuli, sensory consciousness gives us the form of external objects. But this particular content does not represent an essential trait of consciousness and life. There is no reason to deny subjectivity, primary consciousness, self-survey, and the self-enjoyment of their own form to our noncortical and even nonneural cells or to our organism in general. The "I" does not participate in this self-enjoyment because it is specialized in sensory consciousness. (Ruyer, 2016: 98) What is the non-organic diagram of the absolute survey? Can it not be represented diagrammatically? Or the diagram of an intuitional sensorimotor assemblage for a radical political ecology of attention understood as fractals of spontaneous, patterned but stochastic, and infinitely absolute forms of absolute survey entangled in nonlinear revolutionary becomings? Can there be different forms of absolute survey, how does an absolute survey take form, becoming differentiability actual from a virtual plane of differentiation—as Anne Sauvagnargues limns it, "For Deleuze, there are two sides of ... Difference: differentiation with a "c," meaning the actualization, the individuation—an actualized form, annulling the virtual difference; and differentiation with a "t," meaning the virtual pattern of intensity, the pure forces of difference implied in each individuation. Therefore, any individuation always means an actualization, annulling the virtual intensity in having realized a concrete form. But virtual differentiation and actual individualization (differentiation) shouldn't be taken as two separate ontological levels, as if the virtual differentiation could be the cause, or the principle of the actual differentiation: every form (every actual differentiation) is about to become, and so to become re-differentiated. Even this re-differentiation means the transformation of this actual individual into a new form, a new individuation, leading to a new individual as a result" (2013: 47-48)—the process of differentiation-differentiation for the benefit of an untimely difference to come? Surely this is the tendential dynamisms of intensive gradients that constitute the perceptual field?



FIGURE 8 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, “Installation view of ‘in[fra]structional’” Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

5 | THE POLITICS OF ATTENTION IN ADRIENNE MAREE BROWN’S EMERGENT DIAGRAM OF CHANGE

adrienne maree brown writes about attention and collective organising today in her Foreword to *Holding Change: The Way of Emergent Strategy Facilitation and Mediation* (2021). As a facilitator and mediator coming out of several social movements, brown has developed a unique but un-branded radical activist network-generated program of feminist, queer, Black radical, PoC, anti-capitalist, anti-ableist, anti-racist and anti-masculinist organising. She writes, My body of work is mostly about attention. I want to bring my attention, movement attention, and the flow of our human attention to the places we as a species most need to learn and grow. ...With *Octavia’s Brood* (2015), the focus was: how do we attend to, and liberate, imagination, recognizing that we must imagine what we want to create as a future society; imagine who we need to be in order to move and grow in life-affirming directions; and imagine solutions, even when we are told we have reached an impossible problem or condition? With *Emergent Strategy* (2017), the focus was: how do we attend to being part of the living world? How do we learn from nature, from the constant force and beauty and power of this planet, and how do we partner with change? With *Pleasure Activism* (2019), the focus was: how do we attend to, and reclaim, pleasure, satisfaction, and joy, in and as the work of justice and liberation? With *We Will Not Cancel Us* (2020), the focus was: how do we attend to the ways we treat each other within movement, and how do we cultivate an abolitionist attention for humans who make mistakes? Now, with this book [*Holding Change*, 2021], the focus is: how do we attend to our collectivity in ways that align with nature, with pleasure, with our best imagining of our future, that support the ways we contend for power, that support our visionary abolition-

ist movements? Which is to say, how do we attend to generating the ease necessary to help us move through the inevitable struggles of life and change? How do we practice the art of holding others without losing ourselves? This book is about attending to coordination, to conflict, to being humans in authentic and functional relationship with each other—not as a constant ongoing state, but rather a magnificent, mysterious ever-evolving dynamic in which we must involve ourselves, shape ourselves and each other. Thank you for bringing your attention to this work. (brown, 2021: 3-4) brown's becoming in attentiveness is an attention to/for movement, movement attentions. She does as she asks movement people to do: attend otherwise, to decolonise and transform our modes of intuition (absolute survey), understood as non-dimensional, (im)mediated, and instantaneous apprehension of the ecology of our movements, an attention caught and balanced in the act, amidst different streams of becoming, an attention crystalised through practices of intuition, and the sets of (de)habituations that turn that (im)mediated intuition into the marketing fodder of datasets and learned machinic attention. brown encourages us to change the objects of our attention and in doing so change the quality of our perceptual experience of consciousness, in a kind of radical post-phenomenology of intersectionality. For brown, movement and flow both characterise attention and are what attention needs to better intuit. One of brown's question is what is an emancipatory, abolitionist form of attention, especially as it relates to imagination and creativity, i.e. a complex part of human freedom, but one thoroughly colonized by white supremacy and financialisation? Are we only free as we are passing from one more or less complex state of (risk managed, counter-insurgent, entropic) attention, or possibilistic absolute survey, to another, passing through interfused interzones of habituated routines and occasionally *des dérives d'attention* [some attentional drifts], or in Hindi-Urdu *kuch hatke andaaz*, some queer intuition. Imagination confronts the limits of financialised, controlled human freedom when it seeks to transform the conditions of impossibility into a domain of creative ecological action and potentialisation of the body's co-evolving affects and technicities (beyond, against, and within the already given possible), reconnecting the body with what it can do. Joy and pleasure also require a certain attention, a care that nourishes our capacities for revolutionary joy and queer pleasure politics beyond their neoliberal, racial capitalist, heteronormative capture. In the study and practice of emergent strategy, there are core principles that have emerged and that guide us in learning and using this idea and method in the world. I gather them here with the expectation that they will grow. Small is good, small is all. (The large is a reflection of the small.) Change is constant. (Be like water.) There is always enough time for the right work. There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it. Never a failure, always a lesson. Trust the People. (If you trust the people, they become trustworthy, and/or the necessary boundaries become clear.) Move at the speed of trust. Focus on critical connections more than critical mass—build the resilience by building the relationships. Less prep, more presence. What you pay attention to grows. (brown, 2021: 16-17) While brown's discourse rejects the rigor mortis of white supremacist academic discourse, there are ways in which the strictures of the common and good sense of representation are implicitly performed, as in the above—thus the supposed obviousness of presence, growth, resilience, trust, people, reflection, etc. In what way is the large a reflection of the small? If an immanent attention follows the potential(ising) composition of multiplicities in continuous, qualitative flux and intensive variation, what does this do to our everyday notion of 'presence'? Thus, reflection-symmetry are organisational thresholds traversed in the intensive and extensive phase transitions of human and more than human ecologies of affects, metabolisms, and technicities in complex co-evolution. But as I understand it, brown—both in her discourse and her praxis of movement attention—aims to decolonise the habits of attention that racial capital both naturalises and deterritorialises. So then what about the ontogenetic dimensions and sites of struggle that constitute the (post/neo-)colonial relation of attention to movement (growth, change, efficiency, transformation)? (Massumi 2015, 2021; Liebert, 2018: 8-9) What is the relation of a pragmatic emergent strategy to the (im)mediacy of a non-coinciding resonance in the distance-less attention of absolute survey, and remembering that the ambition of all military command is precisely a certain representationalized "absolute survey"—the Israeli

Defense Force always first captures the territory's heights in its genocide against Palestinians in order to precisely master such an absolute survey, as Eyal Weizman teaches us (2017). What is the relation of attention to movement from the perspective of insurgent action, the actions of a rhizomatic ecology on its immanent phase transitions (but remember that the Mosad also pursues rhizomatic movement in its assassinations of Palestinian militants)? How can One attend to the Other, in and through this diagram of immanent resonance, without an immediate mediation, with another rhythm adjoining disparate timescales and intensively alive with a preindividual, revolutionary, and queer difference-in-itself? Should there be a priority of (queer, Marxist, disability justice) politics over philosophy, do we need hierarchies of thought and practice, why are we not speaking of different ontological becomings beyond global north coordinates and discourses?

6 | CONCLUSION

(Im)mediation is key to diagrammatic attention because it is about the very nature, that is the essence (authentic power) of relation, and with Glissant (1997) its poetics—(im)mediation is a kind of attention, a stretching of the senses that exceeds the binaries of representation. Ingold notes: ...the word 'attention' comes from the Latin *ad-tendere*, meaning 'to stretch toward', and it well describes what happens when I begin to play the cello. Perhaps I intend to practice or perform. I take the instrument from its case, apply rosin to my bow, adjust the endpin, take my seat and tune up. But once under way, it seems that I and my playing are one and the same. I become my playing, and my playing plays me. I am there, not in front but in the midst of it, animated by its gesture and rhythm. I feel the pressure of the bow against the strings and the vibrato in the left hand, as I stretch the sounds from the resonant chamber of the instrument as if they were viscous or elastic filaments. Listening, you stretch your ears to join with them, as indeed I do myself, ever responsive to their perceived tonality. The thread of sound and the thread of feeling twist around one another, as each – in its ongoing movement – answers to the other, much as a stream, swollen by rain, answers to the earth through which it runs while at the same time continually reshaping it. (Ingold, !not found!2021: 245-46) Diagrammatic attention is a pragmatism of these stretching processes unified in a temporally bound composition of an unfolding resonance. It is this processual becoming the modulations of which Deleuze following Burroughs called 'control' and that which problematises by de-romanticizing our notions of (im)mediation today (this has also been an indirect meditation on an important new book: Kornbluh, 2024—I am still working through its arguments).

Intersectionality, understood as the revolutionary paradigm-mediation-modulation-condition for living and struggling in the everyday, untimely complexity and quantum entanglement in pluriverses imagined for the benefit of a time to come, in a constantly complexifying, metastable, and variable revolutionary becoming without finality, a cosmic reverberation of an always untimely promise of monsters as a throw of the dice risking all of chance and change in the difference-in-and-for-itself of becoming. Intersectional praxis can thus mobilize a diagrammatic attention. How, then, can radical emancipatory movements that strategically deploy the discourse of intersectionality achieve tactical victories while negotiating the protocols of racist neoliberal risk assessments in the administration of culture (e.g. at Arts Council England)? Risk assessments function as both money police for racist and ongoing austerity regime and a correlation mechanism between non-capitalist jugaad ecologies of care and creativity and racial capitalist surplus value, create the conditions for financialised derivatives to proliferate in cultural production while continuing to administer culture through neoliberal austerity. (Adorno, 2020; Rai, 2024; Rai and Essilife ?; Bonefeld !not found!2014) Participatory art as low risk social engagement is a social good that bundles well with social impact bonds, perhaps a new kind of self-valorising asset-investment? (Knoll and Fraser, 2024) While racial capital requires the individualising attention of (white) happiness maximising algorithmic subjectivity, decolonial and Black Radical, queer anti-colonial

and working-class radical imaginaries, as articulated in the works of draw our collective capacities for diagrammatic attention to modes of direct action and strategic abstraction that refuse the morality and sensoria of racist financialisation and the separation of embodied attention from what it can do.



FIGURE 9 Ranjit Kandalgaonkar, "A section of 'in[fra]structional': New dwgs - new worlds" Gel pen on architectural tracing paper scroll (2019 -) Courtesy of the artist.

7 | CONCRETE

I will attempt this concrete as a summary expression of the forms of experimental writing in this essay. Diagrammatic attention yields an opaque form of writing, one allied with an anti-fascist and anti-colonial mode of problematizing everyday life through a poetics and philosophy of relation (Glissant). Diagrammatic attention activates a form of writing in which nonlinear correlations problematise the will to causality and the will to transparency. As an experiment in writing as affective ethics it proposes a strategic negation of the demand for the clear and distinct, in favour of a fractal diagrammatics. The forms I experiment with in this paper owes a great deal to deterritorialization of writing found in the works of Vourloumis and Ruiz, Harney and Moten, Deleuze and Guattari, Adorno, Massumi, Glissant, Manning, Ingold, Spivak, and Angela Y. Davis. Partly the form is one of militant citationism: we remember as we study with comrades involved in revolutionary becomings and untimely problematisations of the times. The attempt is to develop a resistant if not revolutionary diagrammatology of relations, an ethical practice of queer (de)compositions of resonances, in the affirmation of the immanence of entangled and corresponding affective ecologies at work in different but multiply enfolded contexts. These discursive experiments in diagrammatic attention follow the folds of ontogenesis and the processes of valorisation in racial capital's assemblage of ordered affects and risk assessed affordances; as experiments in forms of expression of the diagrammatic the forms play with dialectics (Adorno, Hegel, Marx) and affirm intensive political philosophy (Bergson, Lazzarato, Deleuze). The forms attempt an enfolding in the movement between paradoxically related series of becomings, transindividual and transgender becomings. If diagrammatic attention questions the individualising laws of genres, its writing will have refused the categories of (mis)comprehension that organise white supremacist, neuro-normative, anti-Black, ableist, anti-Dalit, anthropocentric, and capitalist sensoria across the world. The form of writing doesn't 'speak' for itself, nor does it 'walk the talk'—the writerly form of diagrammatic attention is authentically itself only in relation with intensive (co-)respondences, ontologically composing sense with and through collective desires, political necessities and speculative ecologies of sensation in which it is itself implicated and enfolded.

Rachel Liebert's comments, as well as what I understand of her radical practice of solidarity, have made me

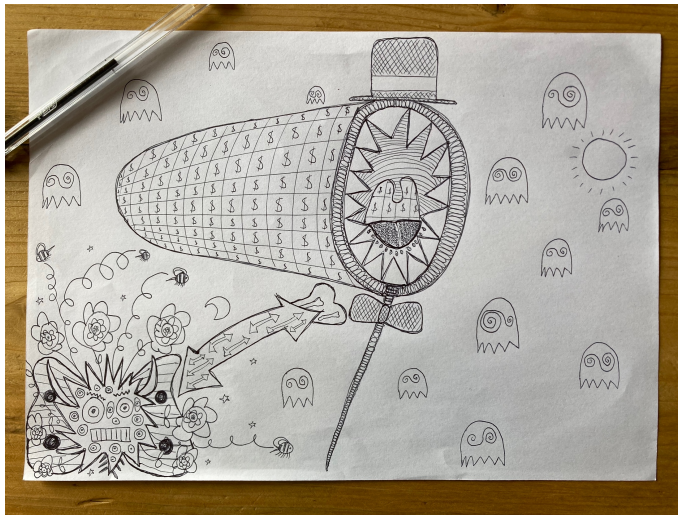


FIGURE 10 Rachel Liebert, Drawing in response to “Diagrammatic Attention”

think specifically of why, in what ways I think the form of writing and research discourse are related in a decolonising diagrammatic attention. What for instance does the form of Kandalgaonkar's scroll drawings suggest about the intensive variations in each 'stretch' of attention –through all those interminable quotes!–in the convolutes above, his attention to a vital technicity, decolonising the historical tendency toward a paranoid 'psycurity' (Liebert !not found![2018](#)) in the encounter with monstrosity, or more accurately in Kandalgaonkar's case, in co-composing with the living Anomalous; or consider the question in relation to the diagrammatic experience of attention that Rachel drew while reading this essay... I suppose, to my understanding, the form of diagrammatic attention to revolutionary becoming that I advocate throughout this series of convolutes is part of a practice of movement-form, or what adrienne maree brown calls movement attention (and I thank Rachel again for her comments encouraging me to engage more rigorously with brown's movement politics of attention). What forms of attention can compose with movements? One of the most moving, agonistic, and revolutionary articulations of such a composition is in Ruiz and Vourloumis's work on formless formations ([2023](#)) and the social condition of subaltern alleyways ([2023](#)); in Harney and Moten's work on the undercommons ([2013](#)) and critique of usufruct ([2021](#)) we find the conditions for an autonomous politics of a postcolonial and Black study. I think as well of the creative forms of interventions against the academic attention economy that objectifies precarious creative labour assembled in the work of the Precarious Workers Brigade (<https://precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/>) or Notes from Below (<https://notesfrombelow.org/>) (Anderson and Jenkinson, [2023](#)). So experimental diagrammatic form is in morphogenetic feedback with the immanent method of revolutionary movement attention. If “in mathematics as in biology, a structure is a closed group of possible operations” (Ruyer), then the writing of diagrammatic attention will fold with revolutionary potentialisations of that closed set of possibilities, a potentialisation of collective and creative capacities in and for movement attention itself.

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